

REMARKS

Introduction

Claims 1 - 27 were originally pending in the PCT application to which this application claims priority. On September 7, 2000, in a paper submitted to the International Preliminary Examining Authority at the European Patent Office, new claims 1-12 were presented. Claim 13 was added by way of a Preliminary Amendment filed April 3, 2001. Claims 1, 6, 9, and 11 have been amended herein. Accordingly, claims 1 - 13 are presently pending in this application.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1 – 5, 8 – 10, and 12 – 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by the Quinlan et al. '002 patent. A claim is said to be anticipated where each and every limitation of the claim can be found in a single prior art reference. Claims 1 and 9 have been amended to more particularly describe the invention. Applicant respectfully submits that the invention described in each of claims 1 and 9, as amended, is neither disclosed nor suggested by the Quinlan et al. '002 patent. Accordingly, the Examiner's rejections based on 35 U.S.C. §102(b) are respectfully traversed for the reasons set out below.

The Quinlan et al. '002 Patent

The Quinlan et al. '002 patent discloses a windshield wiper assembly 10 with a wiper arm 14. The assembly 10 also includes a support structure 32, which is coupled to the wiper arm 14 and a curved beam 24, which supports a wiper blade 12. A pair of rivets 28 mount the support structure 32 to the beam 24. However, as acknowledged by the Examiner in paragraph 3 of the February 2, 2004 Office Action, the Quinlan et al. '002 patent "fails to teach claws as [a] mounting means" for

mounting the support structure to the beam. As a result, the rivets 28 substantially restrain longitudinal movement of the wiper blade 12, thereby limiting advantageous force distribution of the wiper blade 12 while moving across a curved windshield.

The Present Invention

Independent claims 1 and 9 of the present invention were amended to at least partially incorporate limitations previously set forth in claim 6. Claims 6 and 11 were amended accordingly.

As such, amended claims 1 and 9 each disclose a coupler 16 for coupling a wiper arm 12 to a windscreen wiper 14 with a beam 18. The coupler 16 includes a support structure 23, and in contrast to the device of the Quinlan et al. '002 patent, the coupler 16 includes a plurality of claws 24.1, 24.2 for mounting the support structure 23 to the beam 18. Support for the amendments is found at lines 146 – 147, 180, and 185 – 190 and also in FIGS. 1 – 4, and 6 – 8, and as such, Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been added. The coupler taught by amended claims 1 and 9 each overcomes the disadvantages of the prior art because the claws allow for increased longitudinal movement of the wiper 14 relative to the coupler 16 for improved force distribution of the wiper 14 while moving across a curved windshield.

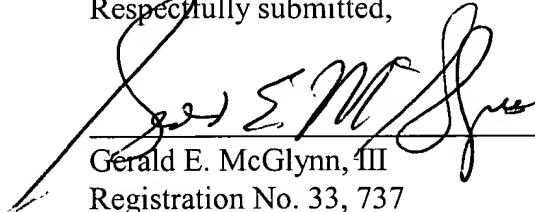
Conclusion

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1 and 9, as amended, each recite structure that is not disclosed or suggested by the prior art and is patentably distinguishable from the subject matter of the Quinlan et al. '002 reference discussed above. Claims 2 – 8 and 13 are all ultimately dependent upon independent claim 1 and add perfecting limitations thereto, and claims 10 – 12 are all ultimately dependent upon independent claim 9 and add further

perfecting limitations thereto. Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that the present invention has been adequately defined over the prior art of record in this case. Therefore, applicant respectfully solicits the allowance of the claims pending in this case.

The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney via telephone if he has any questions or additional comments concerning the patentability of these claims.

Respectfully submitted,



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